

# Hsüan-Tsang (Xuan Zang) Encyclopedia Article

## Hsüan-Tsang (Xuan Zang)

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# Contents

<a href="#">Hsüan-Tsang (Xuan Zang) Encyclopedia Article.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Hsüan-Tsang (Xuan Zang).....</a>	<a href="#">3</a>



# Hsüan-Tsang (Xuan Zang)

**602-664**

Chinese Buddhist monk who made an important pilgrimage to India. Eager to settle certain theological questions in the land where Buddhism had its origins, Hsüan-tsang set out for India in the 620s. Travel into China's western regions was forbidden under the T'ang Dynasty, so he slipped across the border, making a perilous journey across what is now southern Russia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. He was the first Chinese traveler to see all the major regions of India, and he visited the courts of Harsha (c. 590-647) and other kings. Hsüan-tsang brought back Buddhist scriptures that helped lead to the expansion of the religion in China, and he remains a celebrated figure whose deeds are recorded in Chinese operas, paintings, films, and even comic books.